



ART: SILAS HUMPHRIES

HAPPY NEW YEARS!



JANUARY 2011 ISSUE

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Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! It's 2011, wow! I remember my elementary school self drawing futuristic pictures about what the world would look like in 2010 and 2020, I have a feeling that my eight-year-old self would be a little disappointed that we are living without hovercrafts and teleportation devices. My, now, 28-year-old self is pretty hopeful that while we may not see *Back to the Future* style transportation any time soon, I am most definitely sure that we are creating another world, one full of justice, love, compassion, humility, bravery, and liberation that we dream of!

January is a time of resolutions, a time of reflection, a time to take account of the possibilities of the coming year. The beginning of the new year is a time to make a plan and to make decisions about the next steps in life. Today I went to a chapel service at the Unitarian Universalist Association, the national office of my faith tradition. The person delivering the message, my dear friend Nan Moore, was talking all about the importance of addiction ministries. Personally I have struggled with alcoholism for many years, I have been in recovery for 27 months and counting. A UU minister, Denis Meacham, defines addiction as, "A person is addicted to a substance if, after using the substance he or she experiences an increase in serious negative consequences of her or his substance use but does not stop. Quite simply, if the individual were not *compelled* to use the substance, he or she would not risk more negative consequences." I find this definition of addiction incredibly helpful. I think the reality of addiction is not only individually focused, but that our whole society has found itself addicted to many substances, punishment and the prison industrial complex being among it. For this new year, for this beginning of 2011, I want us, I want you, to think about how addiction may be playing out in your life.

I remember when I was locked up the joy of cigarette smoking was one of the only moments of relaxation and calm some people could get. I have a couple friends who have managed to make some nasty wine that could numb some of the pain of isolation and loneliness that spreads like an epidemic inside the prison walls. I know other folks who sneak in drugs of all sorts to ease the struggle of the day-to-day. I know people who are in rehab programs because it will get them time off their bid, even though they don't have a problem with any substances. The reality of addiction behind bars and within our harmful culture is much more complicated than simply forcing or coercing abstinence from substance use. Yet we all need to take a deeply personal look at our own life practices and examine where we have addictive practices, substances we continue to use even though we experience incredibly negative consequences.

Poet Louis Untermeyer writes in his poem, *Prayer for This House*, "Laughter shall drown the raucous shout/And, though the sheltering walls are thin,/may they be strong to keep hate out/and hold love in." This seems to me to be a poem written for our bodies, our fragile, broken, beautiful, strong bodies. Internally, in our minds, spirits, and hearts, we are often challenged by those mean raucous shouts of self-hatred, self-doubt, and guilt. We need to constantly push ourselves to turn to laughter, to hold in love and keep hate out. As we struggle with our own addictions we need to trust ourselves to make the best decisions for our lives. We need to recognize that sometimes today is not the day to stop using and that other times today is the *only* day that matters for us to choose not to use. It is through relationships with people we trust that we can best know how to address our addictions, so I hope for 2011 that you and I can each be honest and ask for help as we figure out what it means for us to be free from addiction and on the long road of recovery.

As we overcome our own individual addictions, we will help our society overcome its addictions knowing that, "Once there were no prisons, that day will come again!"
In love and faithful hope, Jason

Love and Wisdom from Versace

Hello everyone,

My name is Jacquann AKA Versace, Da Don Diva. I'm 20 years of age and I am transgender. I'm currently incarcerated on a 16 year bid. I have an illegal sentence of which I am to be released in about 18 to 19 months. I'm currently in a closed management unit where we're locked 24 hours a day due to the level which I am on.

I'm not mad because I could be back in the protective management unit, but I stand up for me. I'm only 5'3" and 120 lbs. Very feminine. A lot of the c/o's feel I'm an easy target, but once the beast is unleashed they leave me alone. Every day I witness chemical agents (mace) being sprayed on people like cockroaches. It hurts to my heart because of the lack of unity we have.

The Florida prison system is horrible. Administration is covering for security. Inmates are being stripped of their clothing and comfort items. Only a pair of boxers left to lay on steel. For reasons such as grieving the officers, refusing medications, and talking to the warden for not having a toothbrush for 12 days. I witness these things. I used to stand up for others, but I have learned that you can't help a person who doesn't want to be helped.

I have it hard. I love my sexuality. I have dudes calling me names that'll hurt a person to the core, but as soon as nobody is around they try to holla at me. It doesn't bother. I carry a smile and an uplifting spirit. I have no reason to hold my head down because I am what I am and I love it.

I lost my mother being incarcerated and my father never was in my life. I didn't just wake up and decide that I want to be a homosexual. We must realize that. Because there's a reason and purpose for everything. It's up to us how we control it. My heart grieved for the individuals who took their lives because they felt without pride. They became heroes and I salute them until the end. I've become stronger. If everyone came together is this prison system as everyone did on October 5th it would be way better.

I've been receiving your newsletter for months. I plan on becoming as part and helping you all. It's amazing how a few people can make a big difference in hundreds of people's lives. I have my family and a few close friends, but I can't imagine the ones that don't. I know it gets hard, but we must always remember that we are all wonderful and different. The mountaintops are glorious, but it's in the valleys that we grow!

When I read the cover story about Mumia Abu Jamal it made me smile because he didn't just give up. Then when Jason stated, "When I think about the incredible support Mumia has it makes me wonder why each of the readers of this newsletter do not have the same support." I said and made a vow that everyone needs support and help. Especially our GLBT community incarcerated and in society. We are all one. So I decided the support for me to give is to write a new letter of encouragement each month to all of the readers of this newsletter, including the family at Black & Pink. So that's my vow.

The way we can get people to join in the freedom of all prisoners is to show that prisoners aren't just "bad." For instance, a man who's serving 10 years for a drug offense charge. He's an ex-convict who's trying to raise his son alone. He couldn't get a job nowhere and the labor pool was too packed. He took \$10 and tried to turn it into more in order for him and his son to be fed and to have their hotel room fare paid, plus his city bus ticket, so his son can get an education. (This is an example). That dude doesn't deserve 10 years. What about drug classes? Then the system says there's no money. Now that child is left to be raised by a corrupted system. If we can get the people to realize this, then more people will join in the freedom of prisoners.

When I think of a movement shaped by the prisoners for the liberation of all incarcerated people I imagine Pure Unity. Success. Betterment. And the ways things are supposed to be. There's thousands of things need to be changed and can be changed. We can do it! We all Must Be Willing to help ourselves and others.

My words of Encouragement before I close. To all readers and our family at Black & Pink, to the GLBT community and all sisters and brothers in the struggle:

"Do not allow yourself to be broken, We as GLBT, incarcerated, and of difference, we are often stereotyped and categorized, but it's up to us to rise above it and succeed. Hate no one, not even those who wrongfully accuse you, mistreat you, hate you. I know it sounds crazy. It's easier to say than to do. Put your mind to it. You can do it! Trust me, I know because I have done it.

We will be judged according to the way we judge. Your faith wholeheartedly is a necessity. It's all we have during our time of despair. Even those that stop you, curse you, and purposely provoke you can find themselves at some point in their life asking our heavenly father to forgive them or to help them through a situation that they have no control over.

Pray for your enemies. I know it sounds crazy, but you do that and watch. Wait and see GOD move...Pray for them...Pray for them all....and their family members....keep your head up...and continue to pray....Most importantly humble yourself! Remember there's a difference between humble and being broken. When you're humble, you are more patient and tolerable. When you're broken you give up! We all have come too far to give up!"

As Jason always says, "Once there were no prisons, that day will come again."

Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are anger and courage. Anger at the way things are and courage that they don't remain the way they are." -St. Augustine

Take care of yourselves, I love you all!
Another in Struggle, Sincerely in Truth,
♥Lady Pooh♥ "Versace"

***** ABOUT GENDER ANARKY *****

THE WORD "ANARKY" IN THE NAME GENDER ANARKY
DECLARES THE DECONSTRUCTION OF FINITE GENDER/
SEX CONCEPTS, CATEGORIES, AND CLASSIFICATIONS.
WE USE THE TERM "TRANSSEXUAL" SOLELY FOR
REASONS OF CONVENIENCE, FOR WE HAVE OUR DOUBTS

ABOUT IT AS WELL. WE ARE TRANSSEXUAL WOMEN IN
MEN'S PRISONS WHO HAVE FOUGHT FOR - WITH BLOOD
AND A LOT OF PERSONAL TRAGEDY - AND ARE GETTING
HORMONES, AND WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THEM, AND
FOR SEX-CHANGE SURGERY WHILE IN PRISON, EVEN IF
THIS MEANS TRANSFER TO A WOMEN'S PRISON: WE
WILL BE COMFORTABLE WITH THAT.

Greetings in Resistance,

My name is Amazon, and I am a transsexual woman in a men's prison. I am a transsexual lesbian. I am a Kupangak, from my holy land of Kupa in Southern California, or "Native American" or "American Indian," as colonialism would have it. I have been in prison for 30 years. I am from Gender Anarky Collective in the prisons. We are a militant organization fighting in the prisons for transsexual medicine in the form of female hormones and sex-corrective surgery, and against all forms of hate, genocide, and discrimination by cops or prisoners alike, and are also a self defense structure and will fight, have fought, and are fighting for ours on the yards. I am currently in the hole for "battery on an inmate with a weapon." Two other girls are here with me, one for three counts of assault on staff who jumped on her. We survive by aggressive self-defense. It's reality back here.

We are prison-based, not a part of any group out there, tranny or otherwise. We don't believe in them, for various reasons. We only work with a group in Canada.

Your Newsletter was interesting! Your article and graphic on Attica was radical! And right where it should be, on the front page. And the follow up was clever, what would "we" ask for. It could move the right people. We of course agree with what you are doing, and that it is very much needed in the 21st century world order, which is way different than the 20th century playing field. But most are caught up in past strategies that failed, and have nothing radically new to offer, and are redundant and this is a terrible waste of time and energy and cadre. We need new thinking, new tactics, a new strategy. Actually, they are not new at all, but have existed throughout history and simply need to be applied to the contemporary situation with adjustment, as they have been applied to given resistance movements with some success. Even so, new waters must be charted, still, to expand even on that. Yet while this is obvious, some would rather not make the effort to construct a boat that won't sink, less tread the water in one. They would rather f*** around and bulls***. And this is how colonialism works, to wear down and discourage people from resisting in an effective way, ultimately defeating us.

Your public statement claims that the U.S. Empire is "founded on the legacy of slavery." (p. 5, par. 4). We disagree. It is founded on colonialism: on the military conquer of the land of the native first people on this continent, on our genocide and subjugation by force and violence, the theft of our natural resources and precious metals, of which one, gold, has become the cornerstone of the imperialist world financial power structure, from Fort Knox to Wall Street to Swiss Banks and the coffers of the Vatican, and other places. With all due regard to the slavery of Africans, they could not have been enslaved without a place to enslave them. The U.S. could not construct an empire without actual land. In the instant equation, then, it is colonialism, not slavery, that is the foundation of the U.S. Empire. It is an ongoing colonial occupation, tangible, not something of the past. The U.S. uses occupation, foremost, to exist, to launch its domestic and world schemes. The "United States," so-called, an offshoot of the British "United Kingdom," is a foreign institution and a foreign occupation of native lands, with no legitimacy anywhere on this continent. As such, no one is legally or morally bound to obey its laws. We don't.

With regard to abolishing prisons. Prisons in the U.S. are not going to be abolished until the U.S. Government is crushed. And of story. Prison is government. No government in the world is going to allow anyone to deconstruct it's prisons, come what may. Therefore, to actually abolish prisons, the government must be destroyed, overthrown. While agitating against prisons can serve its purpose, we are practical people, and social activism alone is not going to solve the problem of prisons. Gender Anarky's philosophy is not the deconstruction of prisons, but the destruction of the government. The U.S. Government must be overthrown. And not many among activists "really" want that and the post-apocalyptic civil war madness that would follow, total social breakdown, the scramble for weapons and food and water and energy resources, "Mad Max" times, never mind kicking it off.

We have "a lot" more to say, but will let it rest until we hear from you.

I like what the Cuban patriot Jose Marti had to encourage about times like these: "Now is the time of the furnaces, and only light should be seen."

We look forward!

From the Trenches,
Amazon for Gender Anarky

Words from Amazon

B&P Note:

We are very excited to hear from Amazon and hear more about the Gender Anarky program. We look forward to publishing more of their work, perhaps something from the next issue of the Gender Anarky zeen. We also wanted to clarify that we see colonialism, imperialism, white supremacy, capitalism, heterosexism, patriarchy and really all systems of oppression as pillars supporting the same (now global) oppressive power structure, and don't necessarily rank them or pick one as the exclusive foundation of U.S. Empire. Let's tear 'em all down together and get free.



A Letter to Gay Males

You may not know me, so I'll identify myself to you. My name given to me at birth is Lee. And I'm a proud homophile male. I wasn't always a homophile AKA gay male. When I was in my early youthful stage I was a heterosexual. Then destiny took its course and I became a bisexual. Then later on in my lifetime I made the choice to be totally a homophile male. This is just a brief about my sexuality transition from a predilection for the opposite gender, to both gender attractions, to now my fancy for the same gender as I am.

My reason for writing this letter to all gay males whom are reading this is to offer you my encouragement. As well as to say be proud of being gay. There is nothing wrong with you or your male sexual gender preference. Even though many religions say god condemns homosexual males. And even the world all-time best selling book of religious theology, the Bible, states in so many words homosexuality is an abomination.

I have to differ from that propaganda. In that being a gay male is not the work of the mystical devil. I believe that it is fitting that we as same gender preferers co-exist in this world among the bisexual males and females, as well as the heterosexual males and females. I and you whom identify as being a gay male are not spawns or minions of Lucifer.

Also I truly believe that male-male partnerships are natural and a better course to take. I ask you this; who truly understands and knows a male, but a male? In addition male same sex partnerships as lovers intimately, affectionately, and carnally expresses the inner and outer emotions and sensations that males can express towards each other. Only can a male with a male unlock between one another the practice of homosexuality.

So I say to you, indulge yourself in the joining of pleasurable male-to-male coitus. Do not let inhibitions, or religious theology, interfere or be a barrier to you in your expressiveness of living it up as a gay male. Furthermore, I want you to disregard any insults by the ignoramus anti-gay and homophobic persons. Let the pro-vagina fanatics stay anchored to being overly attached to sexing females.

My gay male friends, be not ashamed of that you are as a homosexual. And from now on hold your head up. Because you are someone special.

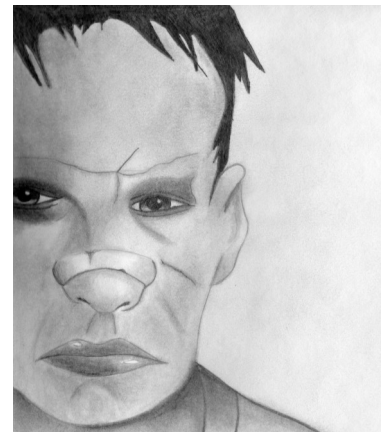
Sincerely,
Robert Lee Porter II, Crawfordville, FL

B&P says: Lee's pride, strength, and openness in being a gay male is amazing! We want to note that B&P stands for queer and transgender people in prison, and this includes many people who are attracted to women, including bisexual and queer men and women and people of all genders, transmen (female to male transgender people who often have vaginas) who identify as straight, and so on. Let's all be proud of who we are and who we love, and let our distinct identities remain true, and come together in our fight against the prison system and for queer liberation.

"Nobody told me"

Nobody told me
That the world doesn't care
Nobody told me
'Cause nobody was there
Nobody told me
About the life I'd live
Nobody told me
About the sacrifices I'd give
Nobody told me
I'd walk through hell
Nobody told me
I'd witness a government fail
Nobody told me
I'd watch my family die
Nobody told me
That no one would cry
Nobody told me
About the pain I'd endure
Nobody told me
Not to embrace a hate so pure
Nobody told me
I'd have a voice this strong
Nobody told me
My past was wrong
Nobody told me
I'd die alone
Nobody told me
I found out
on my own

-Tweek
who writes to B&P "I appreciate your support and your acknowledgment of my situation and my struggles"



Art by Shaun Wilson

For Tweek, Kitty and James

First, thanks for mentioning my name/story on the Sept. 2010 newsletter issue. So it is a small world after all—right? My respect and love go out to you guys so listen up especially Tweek and James. If I can handle this man made prison hell so can you. Sooner or later things will get better, just hang in there. Despite what it seems right now this is a great country with good people. We could be in worse positions waiting on the guillotine to take our heads off like other countries do—right? So get up off the ground, wash your face, eat and get a pen.

Think of anybody/anything who might be able to help. Family/friends, newspapers, courts, grievance procedures, chaplains and so on, write them to help you. Your rights are being violated you all need a transfer maybe even B&P can help and call your state's governors offices, directors, and so on. Sometimes the prison units will deny and hide what is going on. So please if anyone out there free is reading this please help Tweek and James bring their abuse to outside authorities.

As for Kitty- that's my kind of girl. She is gonna make it ok, you go girl. If I could write to you all personally or through a third party for support I would.

Sincerely,
David Trevino

"A Lonely Man..."

A lonely man wit a lonely plan I stand firm
As the doors slam I take my turn
In hell I burst trapped in my jail cell
But I will excel wit a powerful spell
I will be strong and rise before I sink
For I am now friends wit Black and Pink
-Carlos AKA Mad Clown



"Lost For Words"

I am lost for words because I have been away from you for way too long. It feels like a time when you lose a close friend, that you feel like they are gone forever.

I now know what it is like to lose a friend and family member, but to lose you, is like I lost an important part of my life.

It is like an eternity since I have seen you, heard your voice, or even read your words on paper. It hurts me to know that I am here without you and you are there without me.

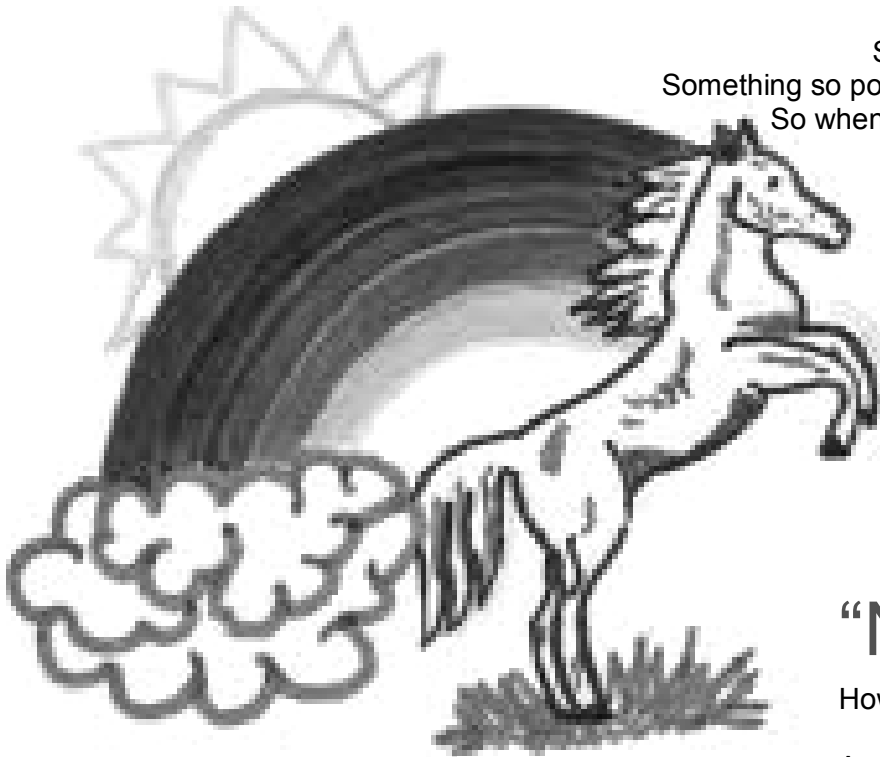
I wish I could have said that I am sorry I have to leave, I will always think of you and miss you, and good-bye. I know you are out in the world alone, while I am trapped inside myself.
This is why I am "Lost For Words."

-Daniel Holland in Iowa

"Realize"

Realize that we shine, as the sun
 So therefore we are beautiful.
 Know that we are strong because God created us
 So what if the haters hate-
 We are too strong minded to relate
 So realize what we have inside our hearts,
 Something so powerful, that can change this world, to start
 So when you close your eyes, realize who you are
 We are beautiful as night stars.

Love to my Gay People,
 Steven



"New Beginning"

How often we wish for another chance
 to make a fresh beginning
 A chance to blot out our mistakes
 And change failure into winning-
 And it does not take a new year
 To make a brand new start
 It only takes the deep desire
 To try with all your heart
 To live a little better
 And to always be forgiving
 Remember to add a little "sunshine"
 To the world in which we are living
 So never give up in despair
 And think that you are through
 For there is always tomorrow
 And a chance for a new beginning
 -Greg Berin

"Seed of Death"

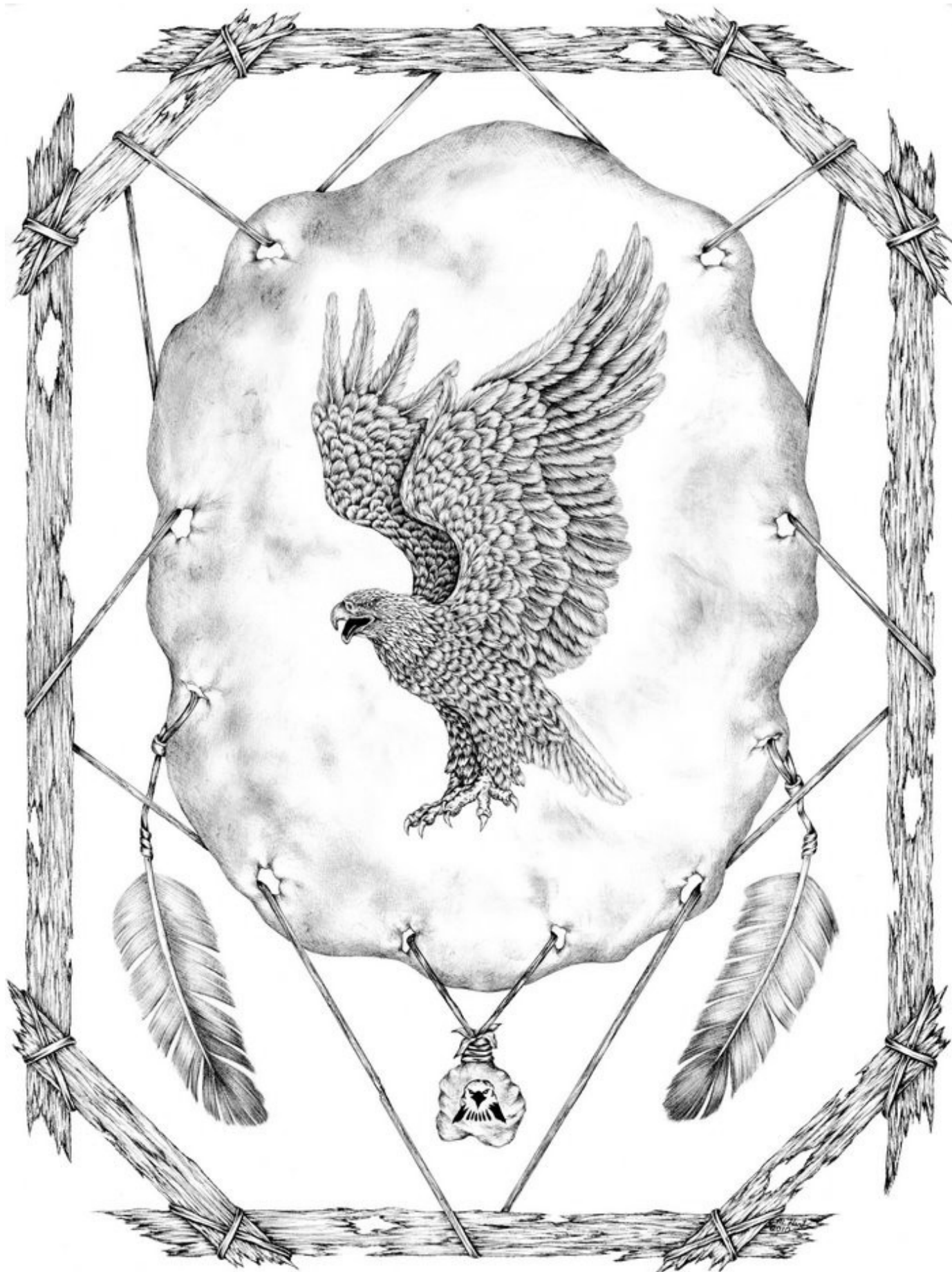
The seed of death was planted
 There was no way to stop its growth
 AIDS spread like a weed
 No breath

The bud of health is formed
 Transformation occurs
 Overwhelming life springs forth from within
 The harvest reaps rewards

I'm alive
 I'm breathing
 I'm whole.

By Jennifer Norman

To everyone out there living with HIV/AIDS...I love you. Never give up hope...
You are strong enough to survive. Life is worth living! **We Can Do This!!** X♥X♥



Art by Michael Hart

"The Anti-Exploits of Men Against Sexism" Part 1 / 5 *to be continued in Feb. 2011*

A dilapidated bus shunted twenty-one prisoners from processing at the Shelton Corrections Center on the Olympic Peninsula to the Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) in Walla Walla, on the far eastern plains of the state. The transport, which inmates called the "Gray Goose," was stuffy in the late summer heat. Each person in the capacity crowd sweated copiously. Each was cuffed to his waist chain, which was linked to the inmate next to him, and manacled at the ankles. Fresh contributions to the open bucket at the back of the jostling vehicle activated the odor of an older layer of miasmatic filth coating the floor. The anxiety was palpable as the entire busload of awed "fishes" and discouraged old-timers approached "Concrete Mama," the largest and most notorious penal colony in the Pacific Northwest.

The institution, when it came into view, was as imposing and dreary as Ed Mead had imagined it would be. Its guntower-capped rock walls protected blocky dormitories and industrial facilities. It looked like what it was: a factory producing dead souls.

Mead pondered the shell of a cocoon from which he might not emerge. He scanned the monotonous wheat fields for any landmarks which could orient him if the opportunity for escape presented itself.

The "Goose" passed into a sallyport. A prison guard boarded the bus and casually scanned for contraband. A second gate opened into the prison yard. The newcomers were disgorged, shuffling two by two, in a chain.

Established cons gawked at the inductees. Old buddies greeted each other raucously; old enemies glared at one another ominously. Any inmate looking fresh and new was presented with more bawdy calls—"Oh, *she's a pretty one!*"—which were accompanied by laughter and leers.

After waiting in line Mead was uncuffed, handed clothes, and given a cell assignment. He asked other inmates directions to Six Wing, his new home, and meandered over. The ramshackle condition of everything depressed him. The prospect of passing his two life sentences in such drabness turned all the color inside him to gray.

The inside of Six Wing was cavernous. Four stories of tiers buzzed with activity as men, packed four to a tiny cell, settled in for the coming evening count. The air, poorly circulated, was composed of equal parts body odor and cigarette smoke.

Only one of his three new cellmates was in when he arrived. "Doc" was a grizzled old white dude who, Mead discovered to his pleasant surprise, was also a jailhouse lawyer. The two chatted amiably. Count was called over the loud-speaker. A squad of fully armored guards appeared in front of the cell. The commanding officer barked "*Mead! Out!*" Mead complied. He was cuffed and escorted to the Intensive Security Unit (ISU) (also known as "Administrative Segregation," the shortened version of which is "Ad-seg"), where disciplinary problems were confined to their cells 23 hours a day. The ISU was located in a stand-alone red brick cellblock which convicts called "Big Red."

Mead's reputation preceded him. Warden Bobby J. Rhay, overseer of the institution for a generation, had read Mead's dossier: a burglar and armed robber who had organized prisoner work strikes during previous bids; a self-proclaimed "revolutionary" who, on his last stint in the free world, co-founded the communist "urban guerrilla" organization "the George Jackson Brigade." It was with this group, named after a prisoner martyr responsible for the deaths of several guards, that Mead placed a pipebomb by the desk of the Deputy Director of the Washington Department of Corrections (DoC) little over a year earlier. Rhay was not comforted by the fact that the bomb was timed to detonate so as not to injure anyone. Contrary to standard procedure he ordered that Mead be placed in the ISU, not for anything he had done, but for what he had shown himself prone to do. One sergeant commented to a reporter from the *Walla Walla Union Bulletin*: "Any GJB member is going to be ad-segged right off the git-go."^[2]

Mead submitted to the degrading induction ritual along with a younger, more slightly built, prisoner. They ignored each other, caught up in their individual humiliations.

"Remove your clothing." One guard peered into their mouths and ears as others observed lazily. "Lift your sac." Another inspection. "Turn and spread 'em."

Mead's cell was disgusting. The walls were painted a putrid green and crusted in fecal matter and mucus. The painted aluminum sink-toilet unit was chipped and emanates the acrid scent of stale urine.

"*Guard!*" Mead shouted ineffectually. "*I want a different cell!*"

There was traffic on the tier that evening as certain inmates, briefly permitted out of their cells, made social calls. An inmate with long brown hair and a beard stopped by Mead's cell. He was a little younger than Mead, similarly built but more powerfully filled out.

"My name's Danny Atteberry," he introduced. "Me and a couple other guys are in here for takin' over the joint on New Year's '74. I know what you're in for and I know the Brigade. It's good work you done. The others of us in here are Joe Green and Mark LaRue." Danny paused, then confided, peering into Mead's eyes, "I guess you could say Carl Harp was involved too."

Mead knew exactly who Danny was. Directly after being shunted off to the ISU for his role in the takeover, Atteberry had clandestinely sent an appeal for help out of the penitentiary. It came into Mead's hands and, after canvassing Seattle's counter-cultural community for aid without result, he decided that some propagandistic direct action could be useful. He formed the Brigade and bombed the Department of Corrections.

Mead didn't recognize Green's name, but he had met LaRue in the King County Jail after his own arrest. LaRue had passed him an unsolicited escape plan which a guard intercepted—Mead was quickly placed in disciplinary segregation and his own prospect for illegal release, which did not involve LaRue, was thwarted.

"The Anti-Exploits of Men Against Sexism" Part 2 / 5 *to be continued in Feb. 2011*

Harp impressed Mead even more negatively than the bumbling LaRue. He was incarcerated after randomly firing at drivers on a freeway—killing one and injuring another—and brutally raping two young girls. When Mead first met him, several years earlier, Harp claimed to be a "political prisoner." Mead was disgusted.

"I'm pleased to meet you," Mead declared.

A couple hours later things turned ugly. The cell next to Mead's housed the inmate with whom he was inducted. A rat pack of convicts congregated in front of the cell with the obvious intention of raping its occupant. Mead sprung from the bunk on which he'd been reclining and watched, stupefied, as the scene unfolded.

The officer in the control booth at the end of the tier cracked an ingratiating smile at the menacing convicts and began cranking the mechanical wheel which opened the kid's cell door. These particular prisoners weren't people to cross, even for an outside employee. Curtis Johnson was the leader of the pack. He was a middleweight Northwest Golden Glove champion and, at least until he was slammed into the ISU for murdering another prisoner earlier in the year, the only black in the prison's otherwise white supremacist Bikers Club. He was accompanied by Kenny Agtuca, a small and wiry Filipino-American who radiated danger, and Al Gilcrist, a hulking white inmate whose physique fit more conventional definitions of "muscle." The kid, terrified, grabbed a book and jammed it between the bars and the wall, preventing the door from opening. Members of the pack tried to snatch the book from him, but the kid snapped it back. The guard cranked the door again, and the kid jammed the book back between the bars and the wall. Johnson went for a pitcher of hot water to throw on the kid, but the scalding was ineffective: a couple trips to the faucet later the standoff continued.

Mead's first reaction was disbelief. *'What is this place? What is happening to me?'* He witnessed the circling of the sexual target hysterically. He wanted to shout out at the perpetrators: *"Stop, you villains!"* or something equally chivalrous and ridiculous, but couldn't quiet the fear: *'If I stand up for the kid the pack might come for me!'*

Mead had had his own experience with sexual assault. When he was nine, living in the projects in LA, he and a friend were raped. The two boys had been lured into the apartment of an older man by his comic collection and, once inside, smooth talk progressed into physical detainment and demands of compliance at knifepoint. After anally penetrating each boy, the man brandished a rifle and informed the children that he was an ex-convict who had nothing to lose by killing them if they told anyone of what he had done. Mead's friend informed his parents, and Mead was subjected by authorities to a painful rectal plumbing with a tongue depressor—a fruitful search for a semen sample—and an inexplicable two week detention in jail.

Then he was an innocent kid; by the time he reached WSP he was a committed revolutionary obligated to act in accordance with his ideals. As he sought the resolve to intervene, the guard tired of the game. The would-be rapists returned to their cells, unfulfilled and irritable.

Mead shared in the obvious relief of the would-be victim, but he was disgusted with himself for having even considered his own well-being in the face of this heinous crime. His opponents, no doubt, were formidable, but when had he been scared away from fulfilling his commitments? He resolved to right the situation—or, quite possibly, die trying.

The next day the cell doors opened for the one hour recreational period. Mead cleaned his cell, then sought out Atteberry, Greene, and LaRue. "What's going on? Why is this allowed here?" he demanded incredulously.

The trio shared his outrage but displayed an unwillingness to confront the pack members—the toughest cons in the toughest joint in the state. Harp listened in on the conversation. Though obviously intimidated by the prospect, he told Mead "I'll stand with you."

Before returning to his cell, Mead discussed prevailing sexual practices with an old timer.

"Don't get riled up," the convict counseled. "The kid's a punk. What else is he gonna do? He'd be givin' it away if no one was takin' it. People get done in here all the time. Sissies're bought and sold for cigarettes. It's just the way it is."

Mead disagreed sharply and chastised: *"You're cannibalizing yourselves! How can prisoners ever improve our conditions when we act this way towards each other?! This has got to change!"* He stalked back to his cell.

While Mead tussled with his conscience the takeover veterans and the old timer acted on theirs. They joined Agtuca and Gilcrist and discussed permissible behavior in the unit with them. Because of Mead's actions on behalf of Walla Walla inmates, his views bore weight, and his dismay with their conduct injured their pride. The pack members abandoned their leader. It was clear to Johnson who was responsible for this change. In the course of making friends and influencing people, Mead had made an enemy.

First thing the next morning Johnson, shirtless, came with a jumprope and planted himself in front of Mead's cell. He began skipping rapidly, crossing the rope back and forth in front of himself with contained grace. His muscles bulged and rippled; he was not only the peer of professional boxers, but an accomplished weightlifter as well. Johnson was successful in his goal: Mead was petrified. But he met and held his opponent's icy gaze.

Mead was permitted on to the tier next. He took the jumprope and stood in front of his opponent's cell. Clumsy with inexperience, he tripped, hit himself with the rope, but kept skipping. The message was clear: he would fight for his principles.

"The Anti-Exploits of Men Against Sexism" Part 3 / 5 *to be continued in Feb. 2011*

Mead insisted that the PJC not only combat institutional oppression and racism, but prisoners' sexism and homophobia as well. Gays joined in and, before long, Mead was chairing a subcommittee which bore the name he dreamt up in the ISU: Men Against Sexism (MAS). The idea was that, in abusing one another, men used sexist concepts such as equating openness with weakness. They insulted one another with misogynistic epithets: "bitch," "cunt," "pussy." Only by rooting out internalized sexism would men treat one another with respect.

To raise the consciousness of the rank and file, MAS started a monthly newsletter. It was called *The Lady Finger*, after the petite firecracker, in contrast to the crisis-prone clandestine publication *The Bomb*. The organization's twenty-odd members also watched progressive documentaries like "Men and Masculinity" and various anti-war films, which distributors sent in free of charge.

Bright cultural workers, such as members of Olympia's Theater of the Unemployed, a political satire troupe, and Seattle's feminist prisoners' rights organization Women Out Now, came to visit. MAS members played host, taking new friends, who had traveled five hours to see them, on tours of the prison, feeding them, and otherwise expressing their gratitude for this lifeline of contact. Many outsiders, for their part, were moved by the conditions of their companions' confinement, and deepened their commitment to stand beside them.^[4]

In the summer of 1977, MAS made contact with the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC), a religious organization for gays based in Los Angeles which claimed 30,000 to 40,000 members. Like many groups committed to social justice at the time, work with prisoners had become an integral part of their mission. John Rowe, an MCC chaplain, served on the National Board of Institutional Services. His only duty was to minister to the institutionalized population of Washington.

Read more in a few weeks in the February 2011. Are you inspired? Tell us! Write Black and Pink-Newsletter!

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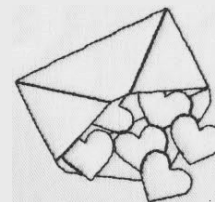
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LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work."

Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

Ms. Melissa Rothstein, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

Note from the editor and newsletter stuffing crew!

Due to changes in the scheduling of LGBTQ events in town, we're going to be stuffing and mailing newsletters on the fourth Thursday of each month. That means you'll be getting your February newsletter in a few weeks, so send us submissions right away :0)